

# PERÚ REPORT

THIS YEAR'S EDITION OF THE **DESCORCHADOS WINE GUIDE** INCLUDES WINES FROM PERU IN ITS ANNUAL SUMMARIES FOR THE FIRST TIME. IN THIS INITIAL VENTURE, WE HAVE TASTED THE WORK OF 35 WINERIES FROM DIFFERENT VALLEYS AROUND THE COUNTRY, FROM ANDEAN VINEYARDS AS WELL AS THOSE BATHED BY PACIFIC BREEZES. AND OUR ADVENTURE HAS BEEN A BIG SURPRISE.

We have found very good wines, some of them designed to please the international market and others with a greater local flavor. We have included a selection of the best in this report—48 examples that show the potential of Peruvian wines and the state of affairs in a country where local wine seems to be reborn or, at least, move away somewhat from the dense cloud surrounding the production of pisco, by far Peru's most famous alcoholic beverage.

But we have also invited some friends to help us give content to this first report. Pedro Cuenca, one of the most energetic promoters of Peruvian wine, has given us a summary of the country's main wine-growing valleys, while Professor Eduardo Dargent has collaborated with an introduction to the history of Peruvian wine, the pioneer in South America. And, to finish, the specialized journalist Gonzalo Pajarez reviews Lima's always-dynamic gastronomic scene. What to drink? Where to eat? It's all here in this report, the first on Peruvian wines in **Descorchados.** 

Patricio Tapia.





I didn't see much in the way of wine during that first trip, however. The true pride of Peruvians was and continues to be pisco, which has deep roots in the country's culture and a wide range of examples, ranging from large distilling companies such as Queirolo, Tabernero, and Tacama to small artisanal endeavors that bring wealth and character to the Peruvian pisco scene. Wine, on the other hand, has always been in the shadows.

And then there's that other 5%. And we have tasted a good part of it in this, our guide's first foray into the Peruvian wine scene. To put it in numbers, we tasted the work of 35 wineries and a total of 80 wines, 48 of which we have decided to include in this report, that is, according to our opinion, they have sufficient merits to appear in the guide and, therefore, we have given them scores so that we can recommend them to you. More than half of the wines tasted were recommended, which is pretty good by our standards.



A different path is the one that wineries such as Murga, Finca 314, Fundo La Mora, Viejo Molino, and Zegarra have taken. The case of Murga, for example, helps to understand this path. Although it began as a pisco project, it soon diversified into wine as well, but with a different approach. Instead of planting French varieties, they turned to grapes such as mollar, quebranta, and moscatel de alejandría, known locally as uva italia—all heritage varieties that were used to produce the region's first wines, even before pisco was made. On an enological level, they have opted for minimal interventionism and, although the winery has sufficient technology, they choose to use clay amphorae, like the ones that excite their enologist, the Brazilian Pietra Possamai, who was related to the energetic movement of natural wines

Although the two paths are very different in both narrative and in philosophy, they seem totally complementary to us, especially in a place like Peru that's slowly awakening from a long siesta beneath the shadow of pisco and that's seeking, on the one hand, both national and international recognition with wines that can cross borders thanks to well-known flavors that are familiar to any consumer. And, on the other, taking a look at their past to see if it holds something

On this exploratory trip, we had the opportunity to visit a good number of restaurants, especially in Lima. The restaurant scene in the Peruvian capital just keeps getting better and better, and more and more entertaining, at the highest level full of stylistic richness. To accompany all these dishes, importers have also begun to bring in a very high level of wines from the most varied origins. But there's starting to be room for Peruvian wine on those wine lists as well. And that's something that, until recently, just did not happen in the city's most famous restaurants. And if it did, it was an exception. We believe that this Descorchados report is making its debut at the right time. Things are happening in Peruvian wine. It's waking up. And we have to pay attention.



# BEST red

TIED

**BODEGA MURGA** 

JOYAS DE MURGA 2020 Mollar I ICA

LA MOLLAR is assumed to be the negramoll variety from the Canary Islands, a grape that has been the subject of a rediscovery in that area of Spain for the past 10 years or so. It's also starting to be considered in South America, albeit very slowly, especially in Peru, where this heritage grape is showing very good results. This version, for example, is superlative. Fermented with native yeasts in stainless steel tanks and bottled unfiltered, it offers a delicate take on the variety with slightly spicy aromas and ripe red fruit interplaying with herbal notes. This is a wine with complex flavors and a firm texture, a rosé with the spirit of a claret that also drinks like water.

# **BEST red**

TIED

**VIÑAS QUEIROLO** 

#### INTIPALKA GRAN RESERVA NÚMERO 1 2019

Malbec, Tannat, Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot | ICA

THIS IS Queirolo's most ambitious blend and is composed of 45% malbec, 25% tannat, 20% cabernet sauvignon, and the rest is petit verdot, all from vineyards planted some 15 years ago in the Ica zone, except for the tannat, which comes from the Cañete zone, near the sea. After a year in barrels (first use, mostly 300 liters), this wine has a powerfully fruity character—the same honest and direct character of all of the wines from this house, although in this case, with greater depth and complexity. This is a wine with tannins that are firm but very well integrated into the fruity flavors that come with the zone's sunny climate. Made in an international style, this is the best you can find in Perú.











# THE SCORES

80 85

**Simple wines** for every day.

86 90

More complex choices

that are still good options for every day.

91 95

#### **Excellent wines**

that must be tried, regardless of the price.

96 100

#### Does perfection exist?

Probably not, but the wines in this group come pretty close.

# THE VARIETIES





white



rosé



orange





sparkling

# **Alberto Salvador Di Laura**

# 92

#### VERA DEL RIO 2020 Negra Criolla, Mollar, Quebranta

LIMA | **12°** 

A delicious blend of grapes from vineyards planted about 19 years ago on the rocky soils of Quilmaná, in the department of Cañete, south of the city of Lima. The wine was produced following the idea of minimal intervention, macerated with its skins during fermentation with native yeasts, all in stainless steel containers. The wine was released to market after four months in the bottle. It's charmingly rustic with earthy yet floral and fruity aromas. The palate is tense, with wild tannins, energetic acidity, and clean, refreshing flavors.

# **Bodega Murga**



#### JOYAS DE MURGA 2020

Mollar

CA | **11.2**°

Mollar is presumed to be the negramoll grape from the Canary Islands, a variety that has been the subject of a rediscovery in that area of Spain over the past 10 years. It's also beginning to receive new consideration in South America (albeit slowly), especially in Peru, where this heritage grape is yielding very good results. This one, for example, is superlative. Fermented in stainless steel tanks with native yeasts and bottled unfiltered, it offers a delicate take on the variety with slightly spicy aromas and ripe red fruit that interplays with herbal notes. This is a wine with complex flavors and a firm texture—a rosé with a spirit of claret that drinks like water.



#### JOYAS DE MURGA 2020 Moscatel de Alejandría

ICA | **12°** 

Entirely made with the italia grape variety, as moscatel de alejandría is known in Peru, this comes from 15-year-old vineyards planted on sandy soils in Pisco, about 30 kilometers from the sea. Vinified in stainless steel tanks with native yeasts (with 18 months of maceration on its skins) and aged in concrete eggs, this is a serious moscatel, with deep flavors, floral notes, and herbal tones. Intense in all its aspects, the acidity is firm and sharp, and the texture is ample and rich in volume. Save a bottle to open in 10 years.



#### SOPHIA L'ORANGE 2020 Quebranta, Mollar

ICA | **11.5°** 

This orange wine combines 85% quebranta, the most famous variety for making pisco in Peru, with 15% mollar, the negramoll variety from the Canary Islands, and all the grapes were co-fermented with native yeasts and a low-level of intervention. The result is an intense wine with aromas of flowers and ripe white fruit. It's juicy, rich in acidity, and has a slight rusticity that lends character. This is a wine for sea urchins, piures, barnacles, or any other seafood at that level of radicalism.

# **Bodega Viña Vieja**

#### FINCA ROTONDO 2018

ICA | 14°

For this malbec, Viña Vieja selects vineyards that are about 20 years old and planted on Sandy soils about two kilometers from the Pacific, in the Chincha zone. After 18 months of barrel aging (70% of the total volume), this is a rather austere malbec with spicy tones that stand out over the fruity notes. The sun in Chincha is evident in the flavors of ripe red fruits in this friendly wine with round tannins.

#### FINCA ROTONDO 2021 Sauvignon Blanc

ICA | 12°

This sauvignon comes from vineyards planted about seven years ago some two kilometers from the sea in the Chincha zone, and it's a very good example of the variety at its simplest, with light and juicy body, sharp acidity, and aromas and flavors that are very close to citrus fruits. Ideal for an aperitif.



#### **BODEGA VIÑA VIEJA 2019** Malbec, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon

ICA | 13°

This blend from 20-year-old coastal vineyards planted on sandy-loam soils in the Chincha zone contains 40% malbec, 35% cabernet sauvignon, and the rest is merlot. And it has juicy red fruit that envelops the palate. This is a simple, straightforward red wine with excellent value for money.

# Finca 314



### ANCLAJES N/V

This is an extreme wine in many ways, starting with its amber color and its aromas of candied fruit, and then on the palate, it becomes a wine that's not sweet at all. Quite the opposite, in fact. It's a dry, austere white (if it can be called white) with the texture of a red. Close your eyes, don't look at the color, and you'll realize that this could very well be one of those reds to drink with grilled skirt steak. This **Anclajes** was made with 100% albilla from 15-year-old vineyards planted on the sandy soils of Ica. It was macerated with its skins and bottled for a year before being released to market.

# **Fundo La Mora**

#### EL COPERO DE CASALLA 2020

Moscatel de Alejandría, Torontel

ICA | 12°

From the traditional and historic area of Casalla, in Pisco, this is a blend of italia grapes (as moscatel de alejandria is known locally) and torontel, all from vineyards planted about 30 years ago under the zone's intense sun (4,000 hours a year). Fermented with native yeasts, this is a wine that deliciously combines the floral aromas of these two varieties of the moscatel family with an ample, creamy texture that fills the palate, supported by flavors of ripe white fruit and sweet spices. A wine that's both refreshing and very complex.

# **Majes Tradición**

#### **TINAJAS VIRREINALES 2018** Uva Italia

AREQUIPA | 11°

Aged in amphorae, this follows the "dorados de chacra" tradition of sweet late harvest wines. The result here is a white with 75 grams of residual sugar, rich in tones of candied white fruit, a friendly body with no rough edges, and good acidity to balance all that sweetness. A slight touch of volatile acidity adds complexity rather than spoiling it all.

## Midolo

#### SANGRE DE VIKTOR GRAN CORTE 2021 Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec, Tannat, Merlot

AREQUIPA | 14°

Concentrated and a bit rustic in texture, this blend from vineyards in Santa Rita de Siguas, west of Arequipa, has a rather high alcohol content that lends a gentle warmth to the flavors. It's intense in tannins an in acidity as well. A great wine for a cookout barbecue.

# Pampas de Ica



#### **PATRIMONIAL DE ICA 2021** Torontel, Albilla

ICA | 12°

This is a blend of 50% albilla and 50% torontel, all from vineyards planted about 10 years ago in the Pampas de los Castillos zone in the province of Ica. Made with grapes harvested a month earlier than the grapes for pisco would be, this wine has intense acidity and light body. A white to quench thirst in the summer.

#### Pampas de Ica

#### PATRIMONIAL ROSÉ 2021

Ouebranta

ICA | 12.5°

100% quebranta from 35-year-old vineyards in the Ica zone south of Lima, this is generous in red-fruit aromas and flavors. Aged in stainless steel tanks from direct-pressed bunches, this delicious juice is rich in acidity and firm in texture. One for seafood paella.

# Paz-Soldán

#### **CONDE DE LA CONQUISTA SELECTO** ROSÉ BURDEOS 2021 Malbec

AREQUIPA | 13°

From the San Javier estate, in the Vitor Valley in Arequipa, and some 1,200 meters above sea level in the Andean foothills, this rosé was made with 100% malbec and macerated for about four hours before being fermented as a white. This is a refreshing rosé and delicious in its clear fruity expression. The body is light and juicy with sparkling acidity. A rosé that's as simple as it is clear in its flavors and aromas and ideal for hot afternoons.



#### **CONDE DE LA CONOUISTA SELECTO**

BURDEOS 2021 Malbec

AREQUIPA | 13.1°

A malbec that's direct in its fruity expression, this comes from the Vitor Valley in Arequipa, planted on silty loam soils near the foot of the Andes at an altitude of about 1,200 meters. Vinified solely in stainless steel tanks, the fruit is ripe and juicy, the tones are spicy, and the body is light with very good acidity. A simple wine for every day.

# **Tabernero**

From seven-year-old vineyards in the Ica Valley, this is a well-defined version of chardonnay. The aromas of tropical white fruits are fresh, and the flavors are juicy. A simple but well-made white.



#### VITTORIA 2018

Notes of ripe black fruits with an accent on the meaty aromas characteristic of the variety in this friendly syrah that's ready to drink now with charcuterie.



#### VITTORIA 2019

Black fruits and light notes of flowers in this wine with a very good structure, simple flavors, and a fresh finish. Perfect for a cookout, this malbec comes from the Chincha zone, from sandy soils rich in vineyards that are about 40 years old.

### **Tres Generaciones**

#### TRES GENERACIONES 2021

ICA | **11°** 

A delicious and refreshing version of torontel, with aromas reminiscent of flowers—not in the style of moscatels, but rather in a much subtler, much less exuberant way. The palate is filled with citrus and more floral notes, as well as crisp and highly intense acidity. A white that's ready to drink as an aperitif or at your favorite Thai restaurant, this comes from vineyards planted on sandy-loam soils in Subtanjalla, just north of the city of Ica.

# Viejo Molino

### Negra Criolla 2020

MOQUEGUA | 13.5°

Fermented and aged in stainless steel tanks, this listan prieto (AKA criolla chica, país, negra criolla) comes from vineyards planted about 15 years ago in the Charsagua zone, about 1,500 meters above sea level in southern Peru, in the northern reaches of the Atacama Desert. This wine is rustic—but in a delicious way, with herbal and vegetable notes, tones of red fruits and spices, and hard, wild tannins. A long-distance runner, one to run that marathon known as the cacharrada, the seven dishes from different parts of the interiors of the cow, a classic multi-course menu in Moquegua cuisine.

#### CHARSAGO 2021 Ouebranta

MOQUEGUA | 13°

This quebranta (one of Peru's "criolla" varieties) comes from vineyards planted 15 years ago at an altitude of 1,500 meters in Charsagua, in the south of the country, in Moquegua. It was aged for six months in stainless steel tanks before being bottled. It's a fresh and delicious rosé with tense acidity and rich floral and spicy tones. Ideal for the fried cuy, the rodent that's a classic dish of the area.

#### CHARSAGO 2021 Moscatel de Aleiandría

MOQUEGUA | 13.5°

From sandy soils in the Los Espejos zone, about 930 meters above sea level, this perfumed and juicy moscatel is rich in floral notes with a creamy texture and no rough edges. Very friendly on the palate. Think grilled sea bass with a caper sauce for a bit of acidity.

# Viña d'Los Campos

#### **RAÍCES NEGRAS 2021** Moscatel de Alejandría

LIMA | 11.5°

A pure and crystalline expression of moscatel de alejandía, known as Italia in Peru, here the floral aromas are mixed with the tones of fruits and herbs. It has a juicy body, medium intensity, and acidity that ensures that nothing here is cloying. A clear expression of the variety that comes from vineyards planted on sandy soils about 10 years ago in the Cañete zone of Lima. Vinification took place in stainless steel tanks.

## Viña Tacama



#### **DON MANUEL 2020** Tannat

ICA | **14.5°** 

For this **Don Manuel**, tacama chose 30-year-old tannat vineyards planted on deep and fertile soils in the Ica Oasis, about four hours south of Lima. It was aged in barrels for a year, and the result is a wine that does a very good job of blending tannat from a sunny climate like that of Ica with the somewhat wild texture and acidity that runs in the variety's genes. It's intense, succulent, not at all cloying, and has lots of fruity flavors. A red that's among the best that Peru offers in French grapes.



#### **DON MANUEL 2019**

Petit Verdot

ICA | 13.5°

**Don Manuel** is from a selection of old vineyards planted about 30 years ago on sandy soils in Ica. It was fermented in stainless steel and aged for a year in barrels, half of which were new oak. This is a petit verdot that's unusual in the roundness of its tannins, without the wild touch of texture that's usually associated with the variety, but with plenty of succulent and voluptuous ripe red fruits. Cellar this wine for about three years—it will only gain in complexity.



#### HANAN

Tannat, Carménère 2020 ICA | 13.5°

This blend is 80% tannat from 30-year-old vineyards and 20% carmenere planted in 2008, all on the deep, sandy soils of Ica. It's a pretty unusual combination, but it works. The carmenere provides spice and herbal notes and soft tannins, while the tannat provides juiciness and tannins in the midst of a succulent wine with firm bones.



#### **SELECCIÓN ESPECIAL 2020**

ICA | 13.5°

This is a tremendous value for money, a petit verdot from vines planted on deep soils about 25 years ago. It wasn't barrel aged, but it did have some contact with chips. It has spices, herbs, chocolate tones, and black fruits. The tannic tension provides structure, and the sensation of ripe red fruit invades the palate. And all for that ridiculous price.



#### **HANAN 2021** Sauvignon Blanc

From ten-year-old vineyards planted in Ica, about four hours south of Lima, this wine clearly shows its time spent in barrels (six months of aging) as well as a very good density of fruit and herbal flavors. This is a commercial wine, but in the best sense of the word. It's succulent and has juicy acidity and the perfect body for grilled corvina.



#### "0" 2020

Malbec

"O" is from a selection of vineyards planted on sandy soils more than 80 years ago in the Ica zone, south of Lima. It was aged for 12 months in barrels, and what comes out of them is a delicious red with lots of ripe red fruits, firm tannins, and intense acidity. It has the variety's roundness, friendliness, and succulent flavors. A red to accompany rice with duck.



#### **BLANCO DE BLANCOS 2021**

Sauvignon Blanc

ICA | 13.5°

This sauvignon comes from a 2012 plantation in Tacama's vineyards in the Ica zone, about four hours south of the capital, Lima. It's simple and straightforward, fresh and lively, and full of herbal notes. A perfect white for an aperitif and a tremendous value for money.



#### **SELECCIÓN ESPECIAL 2020** Carménère

ICA | 13.59

Herbal notes rule this wine, but it also has a base of sweet and delicious ripe red fruits in an ideal red to drink with a barbecue.



#### SELECCIÓN ESPECIAL 2021

ICA | 13.5°

This is a commercial red with light tones of spices and toasted oak and especially of ripe red fruit. Simple and straightforward, one to serve by the glass in a restaurant.



#### GRAN TINTO 2021 Malbec, Tannat, Petit Verdot

ICA | 13.5°

The base of this red is malbec (50% of the blend) planted about 60 years ago in Tacama's vineyards in the Ica Oasis. And it's a juicy young red with very soft tannins and spicy tones. The malbec's floral aromas and succulence are the protagonists in this red for a Peruvian-style sautéed beef dish called lomo saltado

Viña Tacama

#### **BLANCO DE BLANCOS 2020**

Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Viognier

ICA | 13.5°

With 45% sauvignon blanc, this is a fresh and friendly white, it's juicy and has good grip on the palate—enough to consider pouring with an oyster ceviche.

#### **GRAN BLANCO 2020** Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc

ICA | 13.5°

Simple and straightforward with aromas of ripe white fruit, this is based on 40% sauvignon and 35% chardonnay and is a friendly, juicy wine with herbal tones. Ideal for an aperitif.

#### **GRAN TINTO CRIANZA 2019**

ICA | 13.5°

Despite the oaky notes (from chips), this wine has a rich juiciness. It's a friendly, simple, juicy red with very good creaminess. A malbec that's com-

# Viñas del Marqués

### **VIÑAS DEL MARQUÉS 2020**

TACNA | 13°

This barbera comes from vineyards planted a couple of decades ago at an altitude of 600 meters in the Magollo zone in the southern department of Tacna. Fermented in stainless steel, the aromas and flavors of ripe and somewhat sweet red fruits have the word. This is a simple and straightforward red with enough body and reactive tannins to serve with sausages.

# Viñas Queirolo

#### INTIPALKA GRAN RESERVA NÚMERO 1 2019 Malbec, Tannat, Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot

ICA | 13.5°

This is Queirolo's most ambitious blend and consists of 45% malbec, 25% tannat, and 20% cabernet sauvignon finished off with petit verdot, all from 15-year-old vineyards in the Ica zone except for a percentage of the tannat that comes from the Cañete zone by the sea. After a year in barrels (first use, mostly 300 liters), this wine has a powerfully fruity character, the same honest and direct character of all the house reds, although, in this case, it has greater depth and also complexity. It's a wine with tannins that are firm but very well integrated with the fruity flavors offered by the area's sunny climate. Made in an international style, this is the best you can find in Peru.



#### INTIPALKA RESERVA 2020 Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot

ICA | 13.5°

This blend of 80% cabernet sauvignon and 30% petit verdot has a luscious herbal character and is rich in fresh herbal tones amid succulent ripe red fruit. Its tannins are firm, but not at all aggressive. The texture is voluptuous, the flavors are ripe and long, and the finish is rich in herbs and spices. A wine with an international character at a very good time. This red would be very worthy of a place on a shelf of South American wines between US\$15 and \$20.



#### **INTIPALKA RESERVA 2020** Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah

ICA | **13.5**°

For this blend, Queirolo uses 60% cabernet sauvignon and 40% syrah, all from their vineyard in Ica. Half of the volume was aged for six months in second-use barrels, which have added some spice to a wine that's eminently fruity and rich in tones of ripe red fruit and some herbs, a sensation that increases as the wine breathes in the glass. The tannins are reactive and prickle on the palate. A very good display of fruit and freshness from under the intense Ica sun.



#### **INTIPALKA 2021** Sauvignon Blanc

ICA | 12.5°

This is a blend of 80% vineyards in Ica, about 50 kilometers from the sea, and 20% vineyards in Cañete, by the sea, in a cooler, cloudier climate. Fermented in stainless steel, this is a very fresh and juicy sauvignon with firm, rigid acidity, herbal aromas, and some citrus notes. An ideal white for an aperitif.



#### INTIPALKA 2021

ICA | 13.5°

This charming expression of tannat comes from a selection of vineyards planted on sandy soils in Ica, some 50 kilometers from the sea. Unoaked, it has the character imprinted by the Ica sun, but at the same time it has a good network of tannins that give it a much-appreciated grip and tension. This is a wine with good body as well as lots of fruity flavors and freshness.



#### INTIPALKA RESERVA 2020

Malbec, Merlot

ICA | 13.5°

This **Reserva** is composed of 60% malbec and 40% merlot and is 100% from vineyards planted in the mid-2000s in the Ica zone, the primary origin of Queirolo wines. Half of the final blend was aged in barrels for six months, and the result is a red wine with an international character full of ripe red fruits in a medium body with silky tannins, ready now to accompany a barbecue.

#### Viñas Queirolo

#### INTIPALKA 2021

#### Chardonnay

A mild sweetness runs through this wine, a 100% chardonnay from vineyards in the Ica zone, planted about 15 years ago beside Queirolo's hotel. It's succulent and juicy with a very good aromatic expression and herbal tones in a creamy body. Perfect for tequeños.

#### INTIPALKA 2021

ICA | 13.5°

This is a surprising value for money, a malbec with tremendous varietal character, lots of ripe red fruit and a bit of violets in a light to medium body and very friendly tannins. The fruit comes from a 15-year-old vineyard planted on sandy soils in the Ica zone.

#### INTIPALKA 2021 Syrah

ICA | **14°** 

This is 100% from vineyards planted about 15 years ago in the lca zone beside Queirolo's hotel. It's a red that seems to absorb all of the region's sun in its aromas of sweet fruits and its rich and succulent juiciness. This is a friendly syrah with a voluptuous texture. Think fatty grilled meats.

# Why Not?



#### **BLANCO 2021** Moscatel de Alejandría, Torontel, Albilla

ICA | **12°** 

A refreshing white, one of those that you would ask for as an aperitif at a beach bar, this is radiant in floral aromas (the three varieties belong to the moscatel family), and the body is very creamy, although with crisp and juicy acidity that helps the balance and, above all, offers tension in a wine to drink by the liter.

# Zegarra

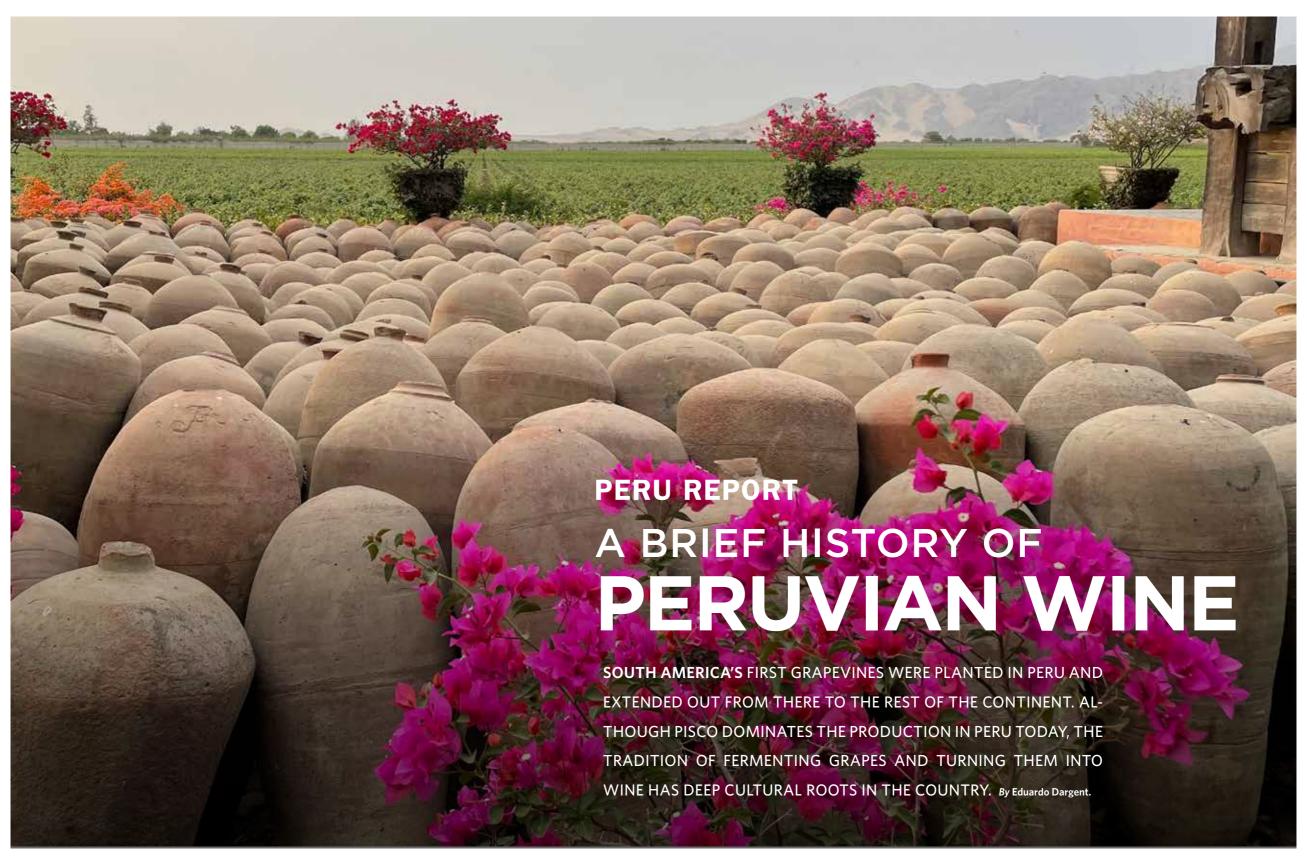


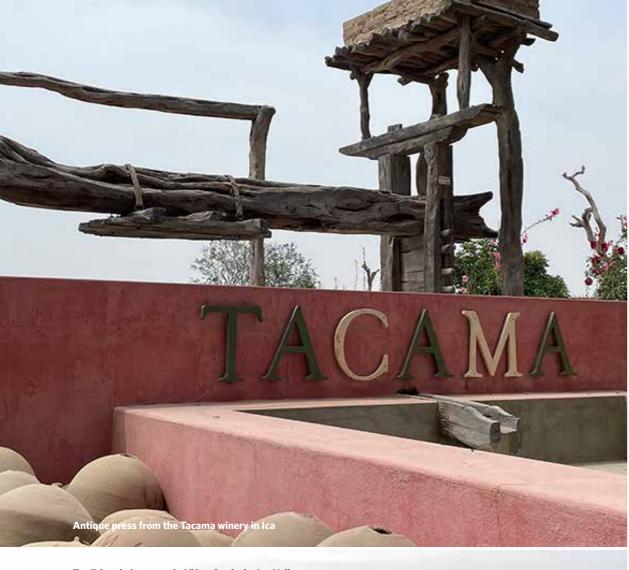
#### ZEGARRA ROSADO 2021

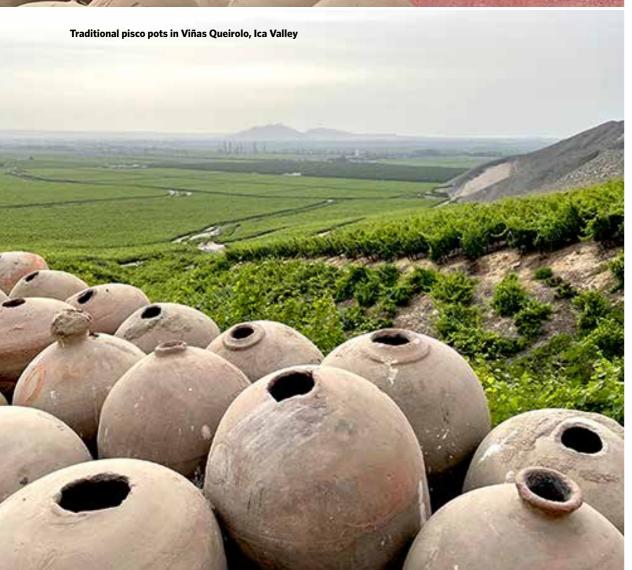
AREQUIPA | 12°

The mollar grape is believed to be synonymous with the negramoll variety, which comes from the Canary Islands and is still grown in that part of Spain. A pisco grape par excellence, this comes from vineyards that are about 12 years old in the Vitor Valley, to the south of Arequipa, and about 1,250 meters above sea level. This is a criolla grape, and it has that delicious rusticity of floral and vegetal aromas, that taut texture, firm tannins, and a very juicy acidity that makes this a very easy wine to drink. A negramoll that's enologically impeccable without abandoning its criolla soul.









oday it is clear that Bernabé Cobo was right about the first grapes planted in Peru. Cobo says, and the researcher Toro Lira has confirmed in the Spanish archives, that it was Hernando de Montenegro who planted the first vines in Peru on his land in Lima around 1538. Garcilaso de la Vega tells of the first grapes near Cuzco. He says that they were grown by Bartolomé Terrazas, a member of Almagro's expedition "who planted a vineyard in his 'distribution of Indians' called Achanquillo in the province of Contisuyo" and that, in 1555, when he was 16 years old "to show the fruit of his hands and the liberalness of his spirit, he sent 30 Indians loaded with very beautiful grapes to Garcilaso de la Vega, my lord, his close friend, with orders to give his share to each one of the gentlemen of that city, so that everyone could enjoy the fruit of their labor" (Garcilaso de la Vega 1943:268).

Grapes were taken from Peru to other parts of South America. Chronicler Cieza de León says that when he passed through Quito in 1547, accompanying the peacemaker La Gasca who came to end the Pizarro rebellion, he saw grapes in the vicinity of that city and later says he saw them in the valleys along the Peruvian coast. Years later, when Garcilaso was in Spain, he recounts that a priest who lived in Quito told him that the grapes that had been brought there from Lima by a person knowledgeable in viticulture. Even more important is the arrival of the grapes in Chile and Argentina, regions that produce the continent's high-quality wines.

In his history of Chilean wine, historian José del Pozo makes it clear that grapes spread from the Ica Oasis to Chile and Argentina, and explains that "In Santiago, Juan Jufré was one of the first to grow vines in what is now the neighborhood of Macul. This same person contributed to the spread of wine on the other side of the Andes, when he founded the cities of San Juan and Tucumán. Jesuit missionaries made vines known in other parts of Argentina and also brought them to Brazil" (1998: 28).

In a letter to his friend Juan María Gutiérrez, dated March 8, 1868, General Bartolomé Miter (1821-1906) mentions that a Jesuit priest from Peru, Antonio Ruiz de Montoya, who lived from the end of the 16th century to the middle of the following century, was the first to grow vines and produce wine in Argentina.

Miter's letter says, "he was the first of us who planted the first vineyard and who picked up the first glass of wine to consecrate it to the true God."

As for the types of grapes that were brought to Peru, the records reviewed seem to indicate that the first were surely brought from the Canary Islands and would be the listán prieto, although Cobo says that they also brought "mollares, albillas, black and white moscatels, and two or three different ones" (Book X Chap. X: 392).

By the second half of the century, there were several chroniclers who were speaking about the quality and volumes of wine produced in Peru, but the most interesting and most important news came from the Jesuit naturalist Joseph de Acosta.

After his stay in Peru from 1576 to 1582, Acosta returned to Spain, spending an entire year in Mexico along the way to study its nature, and it is there that he says, "Peru has a great advantage in one thing, however, and that is its wine, because in Peru it is abundant and good, and the work of the vineyards grows every day in very hot valleys where there is irrigation from ditches." (Acosta, 1954: 82). Later the Jesuit insists on the subject of the first wine from America when he says "In New Spain there are vines and they bear grapes, but wine is not made. The cause must be that the grapes do not ripen completely due to the rains that come in July and August and do not allow them to ripen well; and so it is in the rest of the Indies, except in Peru and Chile, where there are vineyards and wine is made and it is very good." (Acosta, 1954:126).

An interesting detail is that although Peru is outside the wine parallels, quality wine can be produced there due to geographical factors such as the Andes Mountain Range and the Humboldt Current that form a desert that extends along the country's southern coast to the deep and warm valleys, where the desert cold enters at night and creates the daily temperature oscillation that the grapes need to produce good wine. Ancient cultural factors also play a role in that our ancestors worked the rivers that dropped from the heights of the Andes to the sea in just a few kilometers, to open channels supported on the slopes to expand the cultivable area and gradually form the valleys as they are known today.













Viñas del Marqués

TO THE RESIDENCE OF THE PARTY O

**TACNA** 

TACNA VALLEY: The Uchusuma and Caplina Rivers give rise to Tacna's most important wine valley, and their waters are used to irrigate the vineyards in four of its key zones, Pocollay, Calina, Pachía and Magollo, which concentrate 70% of the production distributed up to 1,300 meters above sea level (m asl). The climate in the zone closest to the sea is arid subtropical with high humidity, but the humidity decreases with the elevation and the area becomes a temperate desert with scant rainfall. The most widely grown red varieties are the negra criolla, petit verdot, carmenere, cabernet franc, cabernet sauvignon, malbec, pinot noir, garnacha, and barbera. The white varieties include moscatel de alejandría, chardonnay, and moscato de austria. All grown on alluvial soils with a sandy loam texture.

#### MAIN PRODUCING WINERIES IN TACNA

- Labrador de Magollo
- Finca Maravilla
- Santa Elena
- Marqués Cariñoso
- Viña Magollo

2. 4. 5.
Pachía P
Calana P
TACNA

- 1. FINCA MARAVILLA
- 2. SANTA ELENA

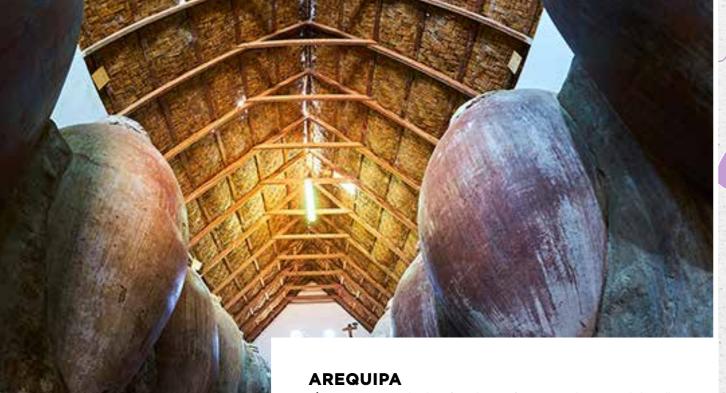
MARISCAL NIETO

- 3. EL MARQUÉS CARIÑOSO 4. LABRADOR DE MAGOLLO
- LABRADOR DE MAGOLLO
- 5. VIÑA MAGOLLLO

TACNA

- BARBERA
- CABERNET FRANC
- CABERNETSAUVIGNON
- CARMÉNÈRE
- CHARDONNAY
- MALBEC
- MOSCATEL
- MOSCATEL DE ALEJANDRÍA
- MOSCATO DE AUSTRIA (TORRONTÉS SANJUANINO)
- NEGRA CRIOLLA
- PETITVERDOT
- PINOT NOIR
- SYRAH





**VÍTOR VALLEY:** Located an hour from the city of Arequipa and 1,200 m asl, this valley's colluvial soils have a sandy-loam texture with a high clay content in some sectors, and its climate is temperate arid. The main red varieties grown are the negra criolla, malbec, mollar, moscatel, and quebranta; the predominant white grape is moscatel de alejandría.

#### WINERIES:

Hacienda del Abuelo

- Paz Soldán
- Hacienda del Abuelo
- El Quebranto

**SANTA RITA DE SIGUAS:** This is an irrigated area between two rivers, Siguas and Vítor, in the province of Arequipa. It has a hot desert climate with temperatures of approximately 26°C in the morning and 11°C at night. It has little humidity and many hours of sunshine, which primarily allows for the production of red varieties such as quebranta, negra criolla, moscatel, cabernet sauvignon, merlot, tannat, malbec, and sangiovese. Its desert soils are sandy-loam with compounds of volcanic origin.

#### WINERIES:

Midolo

**MAJES VALLEY:** The vineyards are located at altitudes that vary between 500 and 1100 m asl, its main red varieties are: negra criolla, syrah, and malbec; the most widely planted white variety is moscatel de alejandría. It has an arid subtropical climate and alluvial soils with a sandy-loam texture.

#### WINERIES::

- Majes Tradición
- Toro Muerto

**CARAVELÍ:** Its vineyards are the highest in the region, located between 1,600 and 1,800 m asl. It has an arid subtropical climate, and its soils are colluvial with a sandy-loam texture and a high clay content in some sectors and sillar (calcareous material) with sandy-gravel soils in others. The main grapes planted are negra criolla, moscatel, and mulata, which are all considered part of its wine heritage along with the 200-, 400-, 700-, and 900-liter clay containers that have been used for more than 400 years. The most commonly used containers are those of 400 and 700 liters.

WINERIE: Acapana





#### **ICA**

ICA VALLEY: The department of Ica represents 50% of Peru's Vitis vinifera crops, and 65% of the total hectares are concentrated in the Ica Valley. Its primary vineyards are located at the foot of the Andes Mountains, 60 km from the sea and at altitudes ranging from 400 to 650 m asl. The region's soils are predominantly sandy loam, and its climate is arid subtropical with scant rainfall throughout the year. A broad range of grapes are grown in Ica. Of the 17 red varieties and 12 whites, the most widely grown dark-skinned grapes are malbec, quebranta, cabernet sauvignon, and tannat, and the white varieties are sauvignon blanc, moscatel de alejandría, chardonnay, albilla, and torontel.

#### WINERIES:

- Tacama
- Queirolo
- Pampas de Ica
- Ocucaje
- Finca 314
- Vista Alegre
- Villacurí
- Mimo

CHINCHA VALLEY: The vineyards in this zone are distributed in the districts of Chincha Baja, Grocio Prado, and Sunampe, at an altitude that ranges between 0 and 300 m asl. Its climate is subtropical desert, and because it borders the Peruvian coastline, it has a high concentration of humidity and a pronounced influence of the sea breezes, which decreases in the higher altitude zones. Its soils have a light sandy-loam texture, with good drainage, a moderately alkaline pH, and no problems with salts or carbonates. The climatic and soil conditions are ideal for growing white varieties such as chenin blanc and sauvignon blanc, as well as the slow-ripening red varieties cabernet sauvignon, syrah, and malbec.

#### WINERIES:

- Viña Vieja
- Tabernero

PISCO VALLEY: This traditional valley along with Chincha represent 33% of Vitis vinifera grown in the Ica region. Its vineyards are located at altitudes ranging from 0 to 300 meters asl, and its proximity to the coast provides it with an optimal climate for growing heritage varieties such as mollar, albilla, quebranta, moscatel of alejandría and torontel.

#### WINERIES:

- Murga
- Fundo La Mora





ICA ALBILLA ALICANTE BOUSCHET ANCELLOTTA - ARRUFIAC BARBERA CABERNET FRANC

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

■ MOSCATEL NEGRO DE PERÚ

NIELLUCCIO (SANGIOVESE)

MUSCAT OTTONEL\*

■ NEGRACRIOLLA

■ PEDRO GIMÉNEZ

■ PETIT MANSENG

PALPA

■ PETIT VERDOT

CARMÉNÈRE

CHARDONNAY

■ CHENIN BLANC

COLOMBARD

■ ITALIA ROSADA

MALBEC

■ MERLOT

MOLLAR

9. QUEBRANTA MOSCATEL DE ALEJANDRÍA MOSCATEL DE HAMBURGO

ROUSSANNE SAUVIGNON BLANC SEMILLÓN SYRAH TANNAT ■ TEMPRANILLO ■ TORONTEL \*

■ UGNI BLANC (TREBBIANO) VIOGNIER

Perú

1. TABERNERO CHINCHA 2. VIÑA VIEJA 3. HATUN AUCA 4. ROCA REY PISCO 5. MURGA 6. FUNDO LA MORA 7. VISTA ALEGRE 8. TACAMA 9. OCUCAJE 10. QUEIROLO ICA 11. FINCA 314 12. PAMPAS DE ICA 13. GRIMALDI 14. VILLACURI 15. BODEGA MIMO 16. SAINT LAZIER



#### LIMA

**CAÑETE VALLEY:** This production valley with alluvial soils extends along the river of the same name and represents 70% of the *Vitis vinifera* plantations in the region. It's located 140 kilometers from the city of Lima, and its vineyards grow at altitudes ranging from 0 to 850 m asl. Due to its different altitudes, it has various microclimates, for example, the lower zone (between 0 and 200 m asl) is influenced by sea breezes and high humidity, which is ideal for growing moscatel de alejandría, pinot noir, and sauvignon blanc. As we move up toward the mountains and away from the sea, the sky is clearer, generating more hours of sunshine, so we have a drier and warmer climate, which is good for growing dark-skinned varieties such as quebranta, cabernet sauvignon, malbec, and tannat.

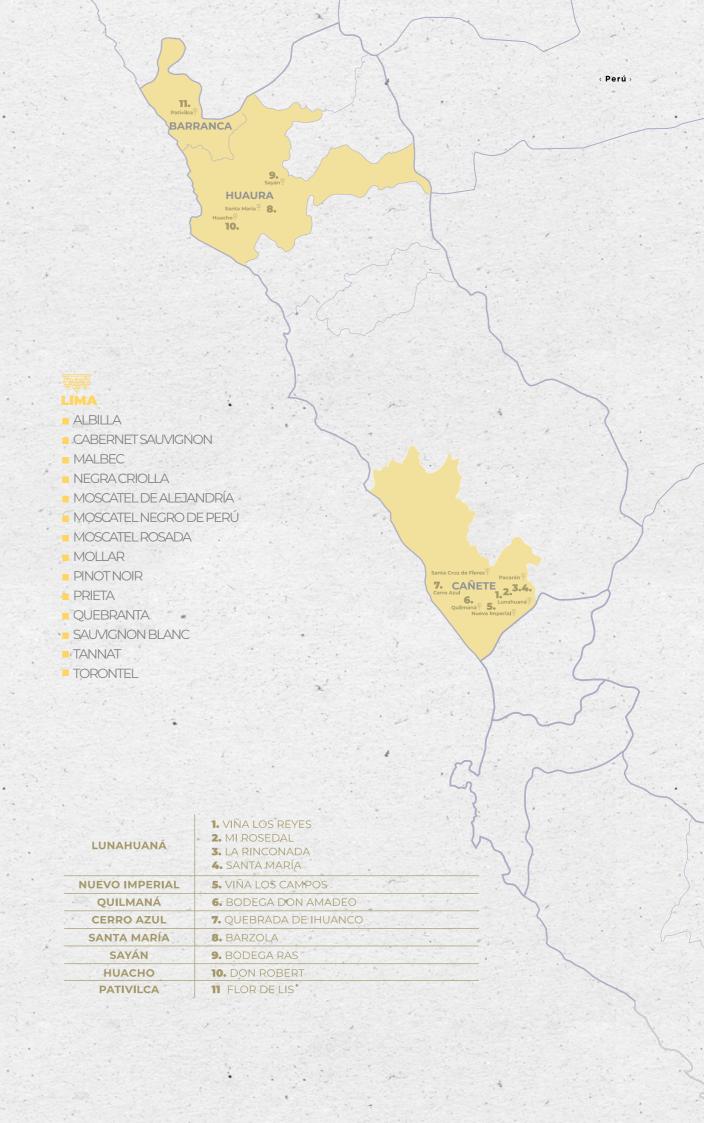
#### WINERIES:

- Viña Los Reyes
- Viña Los Campos
- Mi Rosedal
- Don Amadeo
- Santa María
- La Rinconada
- Quebrada de Ihuanco



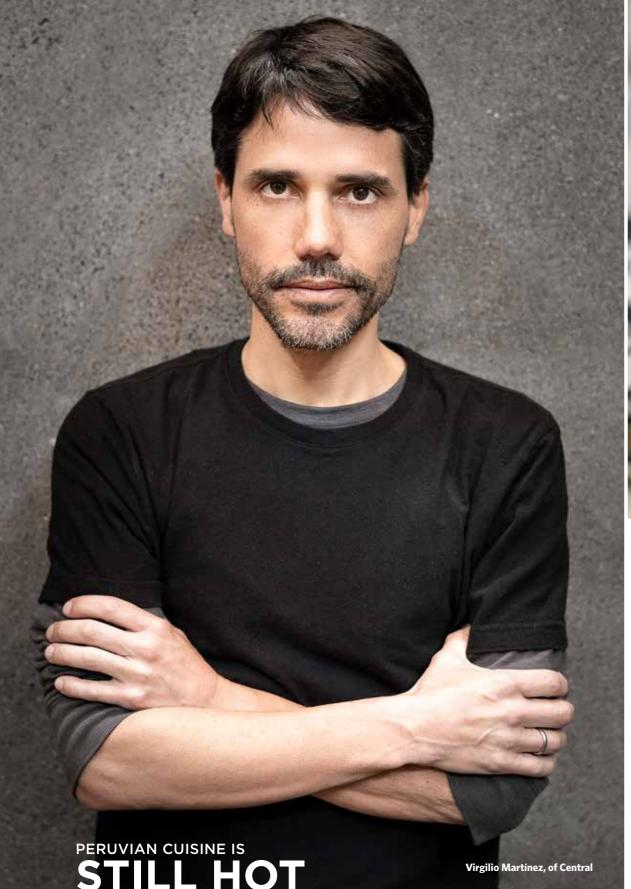














eru is a flavorful country. Its geographical diversity, its confluence of cultures, its infinite pantry, and the omnivorous spirit of its people are the primary reasons for its culinary virtues, that are now recognized world wide. Today, despite how difficult the pandemic has been for the culinary sector, the Peru full of great flavors has begun its recovery, once again thanks to the push of its people and of local diners who love good food, since foreign tourism still hasn't fully reactivated.

Curiously, there was talk of a certain lethargy in the emblematic spaces of local gastronomy before the pandemic, with media-focused chefs who spent more time touring the world than creating in their kitchens. After the decade-long "gastronomic boom," conservatism predominated, with diners who demanded little from their cooks and those who rested on their laurels, some that soon dry up without the fire of passion and innovation.

The country that had created the fabulous Nikkei cuisine, that had given Chinese fare a new twist, that had Peruvianized pasta and pesto and reinterpreted black cuisine returned to old standards such as ceviche and *lomo saltado*. Sure, those dishes are tasty and do represent us, but culinary Peru is infinite, and we were forgetting that.

The pandemic brought us back to reality, and, as often happens, the crisis was an engine that generated ideas out of necessity. And while many restaurants closed, still others emerged or were reinvented. For example, reduced formats with small and possible investments have gained new momentum and have become local culinary benchmarks for their daring, self-confidence and freedom. Little by little, that lethargy is being set aside, and creative curiosity is back.

#### THE CLASSICS

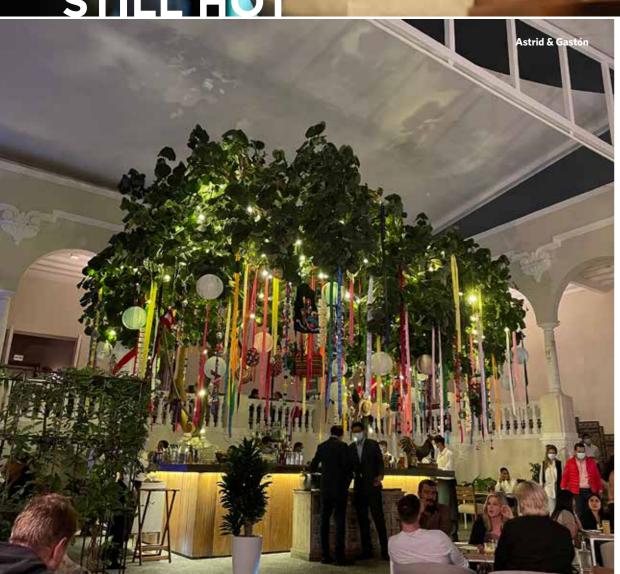
There are three spots that lend fame to Peru's form of haute cuisine: Central, Maido, and Astrid & Gastón. What are their kitchens like today? Renewed, impetuous, and joyful.

At **Central**, Virgilio Martínez continues to promote his "alturas" (heights) concept thanks to the research at Mater Initiative, his scientific and gastronomic laboratory. Mater delves into Peru's microclimates—we have almost all of those that exist on the planet—and works with artisanal fishermen and with Andean and Amazonian communities, researches and recovers their ingredients, pays a fair price for them, and gives them prestige by putting them on his menu. Wonders such as ocas, ollucos, and mashuas, previously seen as food for poor country folk, are now eaten with veneration. That's another of the benefits of gastronomy, it lends self-esteem and breaks social prejudices. Virgilio also has an impressive aesthetic approach that matches the flavors. His dishes are made to admire as well as devour.

**Maido** has to be the tastiest restaurant in Lima. Mitsuharu Tsumura, its creator, reformulates Peruvian cuisine from the Nikkei and, incidentally, Japanese culinary traditions. The famous Peruvian chupe de camarones (shrimp chowder) is transformed into a brothy dim sum, and a Japanese katsu sando rises to an epicurean sandwich made not with street-style pork rinds, but with beef sweetbreads, and his nigiri is made with a Mediterranean bull sliced and flambéed at the table. Here there's flavor, there's technique, and there's knowledge, although, in reality, he could take more risks these days—it's not always worth playing it safe, not at **Maido.** 

Jorge Muñoz, in his early 30s, must be Peru's most talented chef of his generation. Trained by the Adrià brothers in Catalonia, he took over the kitchens of **Astrid & Gastón** just before the pandemic. At first, overwhelmed by the local pantry and his reunion with his Peruvian roots, his cuisine was a bit over the





top. Fortunately, once his initial enthusiasm had subsided, he managed to find his way, and now there is flavor, elegance, experimentation, and a controlled baroque style that excites him. He has also been able to offer common ingredients such as *pota* in a luxurious space along with others that Peruvians tend not to consume such as barnacles and clams from Tacna. Cooking as a patriotic act.

In these times of signature cuisine, Peru is gaining more and more presence thanks to the hand of Jaime Pesaque. His restaurant **Mayta** looks to the sea, but also to organic produce. His laboratory Yachay, located in Paracas, a historic and desert land, supplies the restaurant with sustainable, marine, and vegetable ingredients that allow him to achieve unique dishes such as carrots with yogurt, *conchas* with citrus, kid goat with legumes, and more.

#### THE NEWCOMERS

Barranco, a beautiful district in Lima, is the heart of the city's new cuisine. It's the home of the stupendous **Mérito**, the flavorful **Siete**, the very lovable **Pan Sal Aire**, the daring **Awicha**, the Peruvian-style **Isolina**, the pizzas by the slice at **Taglio**, and an infinity of cafes and sourdough bakeries that lend color, flavor, daring, and a touch of romanticism to our scene. And many of these ventures are also initiatives of young people no older than 30 years old.

Following Peru's omnivorous spirit that mixes everything, that brings everything together, **Mérito** is the creation of a Venezuelan chef, Juan Luis Martínez who is transforming local cuisine from his beautiful space in Barranquilla. His ceviche on toast and the street corn with cheese are made with Venezuelan ingredients that give a creative twist to the Huancaina sauce. **Mérito** is avant-garde, creative, and the maximum benchmark of our current cuisine. The fact that there's a Venezuelan behind it should make us happy, because that's where the new Peruvian fusion will come from, one that sustains its identity in its diversity.

**Siete**, by Ricardo Martins, a diligent disciple of Rafael Osterling and Virgilio Martínez, knows how to give elegance to marine ingredients, ferments, and vinegars. *Navajas*, *charelas*, *conchas*, and other shellfish acquire new citizenship in his hands, without ever having been foreigners. How does he do it? With technique always at the service of flavor.

Beyond Barranco, and putting a feminine face on our cuisine, **Arlette Eulert** stands out for a style that's the product of knowledge and persistence. Matria, Arlette's restaurant, while still Peruvian, is cosmopolitan, with many nods to Asia and the Mediterranean. Her *tiradito* is northern, her *conchas* are Thai, her lobster is a surf & turf, and so on. Sitting at her table means traveling the universe from the pleasure of a mouthful.

Rooftop establishments have also become fashionable, wanting to be a trend. The one that everyone visits these days is **27 Tapas**, in the brand new Iberostar Hotel in Miraflores, which impresses with its magnificent view of the bay. **27 Tapas** is directed by Carlos Testino, a creative chef who has just inaugurated—also at the Iberostar—the **Ortega & Huamán** Restaurant, an Andean-Mediterranean fusion that hopes to set the pace with dishes from the sea and mountains

#### PERUVIAN, BUT DIFFERENT

Sapiens and Fuego are grill restaurants, but with a non-traditional approach, a novel style in a country that's often conservative. At Sapiens, the coals are a resource from which the world is explored. The vegetables are grilled with exquisite and dazzling results. Broccoli, beets, and leeks have never been so flavorful in Peru. Rice dishes are delightful with vegetables, with seafood, or with pork and prawns. Sure, there are grilled meats, but they're just one more element on a generous menu with other high points such as the products from its charcuterie cellar where they work with ingredients such as paiche fish, alpaca, and local duck. At Sapiens, Peruvian cuisine continues to evolve.

Fuego, by Christian Bravo, is charisma brought to the table. Bravo bets on a different type of grill that veers away from classic steaks. At Fuego they work on *kamados*, the Japanese grill, to roast vegetables, cook briskets, and sear American Flat Irons. His wonderful tartare has Asian touches and, as a bonus, he prepares it for you at the table. Fuego, like today's Peruvian cuisine, is hot.

